

THE DIPLOMACY ALLIANCE AGAINST HEART DISEASE

Did I really say last issue that we wouldn't be running the Runestone Poll Pledge Drive this year? Well, we changed our minds. Since nobody else volunteered, we figured that it would be better if we soldiered on rather than abandon the whole idea.

Unfortunately, this year's response has been very disappointing. So far we have received a mere ten pledges. The main reason for this is that Bruce isn't hyping this year's Runestone Poll. Also I suspect that heart disease isn't such a hot topic as AIDS. Moreover, some people may have been annoyed at the delay in sending out last year's receipts.

I'd like to make a special request to editors. Please either reprint or distribute the Pledge form. I'll even provide you with copies of the form. Just let me know how many you need and I'll send them to you.

I'm also interested in attracting pledges from abroad. Don't be put off by the fact that the money benefits the American Heart Association. The research will ultimately benefit people all over the world. Just send me your pledges in sterling, Australian dollars or whatever and pay through the International Subscription Exchange.

Since this will be our last (yes, really, don't look at us with that expression of sheer disbelief) stint as Pledge Drive organisers, we would like it to be successful. If you're interested, please help.

PLAYLIST All the usual suspects. Mostly REM. Next month, instead of publishing, I hope to get hold of New York by Lou Reed (Dirty Boulevard is an excellent single), Hunkpapa by the Throwing Muses (on the strength of their previous album and good reviews in the Village Voice and The Abyssinian Prince), plus the new Tanita Tikaram and The The albums whose titles currently escape me. The latest The The lineup combines one of my favourite lyricists (Matt Johnson) and one of my favourite guitarists (Johnny Marr). Not to be missed!

Excitement City Unlimited was published by Simon Billenness & Barbara Passoff, 630 Victory Blvd. Apt 6F, Staten Island, NY 10301. Home phone (718) 981 6247. This issue still cost you 75c, if you live in North America, and \$1.25 if you live elsewhere. Washington Up Against The Wall.

A couple of weeks ago I was enjoying a meal with friends in Chinatown. Actually the food, vegetables feebly pretending to be meat dishes, wasn't all that hot, but the company was excellent. Later as we tucked into cake in Little Italy I wondered why I spent money on publishing when I could have more fun dining out.

At first I planned to cut a few trades. Then I decided to cut everything except those zines I really enjoyed. When I discovered that I could count my favourite zines on my fingers, I realised the extent of my disenchantment with the hobby.

To be blunt, I can't be bothered to publish any more. Aside from a one year break, when I graduated university, got married and emigrated, I've been publishing since I was sixteen, and now I'm completely burned out. In any case, if zines like House of Lords and The Megadiplomat are anything to go by, the North American hobby is so boring and petty that I can't muster much enthusiasm for it any more.

Back in the real world, school and work are good. My MBA is progressing well. I've just finished my two proficiency classes and now I'm choosing courses for the summer and autumn semesters. It was good to take a couple of year's break before entering graduate school because it gave my enthusiasm for academia a chance to rebound. And rebound it certainly has! I was a lazy undergraduate but now I find myself doing my homework and achieving good grades. I can't wait to cut my teeth on an actual credit course. Meanwhile, after several long conversations with senior management at work, I'm shifting to the loans department in preparation for my career goal as a credit analyst/loan officer.

Naturally my time is going to be very limited. At the moment I can handle everything but there's so much more that I'd like to do. If I really want to advance, I ought to find a place in one of the big banks' training programmes, instead of trying to wring every drop out of my current job. I'm also planning to applying for a transfer to the MBA programme at New York University which is more rigorous and prestigious. Once I've settled down at either Pace or NYU, I'd like to build up a "Business Students For Social Responsibility" organisation, to promote the idea (and also to give me the excuse to network like crazy with potential colleagues and employers.) All in all, the next few years should be very busy.

So you can probably understand my reasons for folding...

THE FOLD ITSELF

Games I will continue to run my three remaining games - Braised Celery (Downfall), Artichoke Hearts (Cline 9 Person) and Diced Dates (Stab). I would like to have the Downfall report included as a subzine to an established zine because the press deserves a wider audience. Any editor interested?

My two outside GMs - Brian Longstaff and Bob Gossage - will be cruelly left to fend for themselves. However I'm sure they will be perfectly able to cope.

Subscriptions All North American subbers with credit of \$1 or more will find a cheque enclosed with this issue. A couple of you, on hearing of my impending fold, have kindly offered to donate your remaining sub balance to the Diplomacy Alliance Against Heart Disease. Any else, who wants to do the same, can simply return their refund cheque.

International subscriptions pose a problem since they will probably swamp the International Subscription Exchange if I return them all at once. In any case, I expect many ECU subbers would rather prefer to transfer their subs to another North American zine. I personally would recommend Carolina Command And Commentary, Diplomacy World, Cathy's Ramblings, Vertigo, Rebel, Passchendaele, Praxis, benzene, and Northern Flame amongst others.

International subbers should let me know where they want their money by July 31st. If I don't hear anything, I'll simply return your money via the ISE on that date.

I will only be subbing to a handful of zines myself, so don't be offended if I choose not to subscribe to yours.

* * * * *

Ever since I took over Twenty Years On, then the British version of the Zine Register, the habit of recommending zines has become ingrained. I suppose then it's fitting that I spend my last half page as a zine editor plugging a couple of zines.

Greatest Hits Pete Birks, 38 Highlands Court, Highland Rd, London SE19 1DS, ENGLAND

Except for the excellent benzene and The Abyssinian Prince, it's hard to find a good American chatzine which doesn't contain reams of feuding drivel. American hobbyists, looking for a good fun read, should check out GH. Over the last year the zine has settled down into a pleasing mix of recipes, betting shop anecdotes, favourite novel compilations, zine reviews, political articles and lively letters on all of the above. Unreservedly recommended.

benzene mark lew, 438 Vernon #103, Oakland, CA 94610, USA

In many ways, bz could be regarded as the US equivalent of GH. Mark views the world through a more American and right-wing prism than Pete, but he shares the same inquiring mind and urge to publish. This is a zine I will enjoy reading and contributing to once I've finished wrapping up ECU.

BRAISED CELERY: RETHE 3019-I

Dwarves Doug Rowling

A Wit-Esg and puts on The Ring, A Eot S A Wit-Esg, A NRh.s...
Elven a RRu, A BMa-Ang, A Nen-Bre

Elves Cathy Ozog

A Lor-Cal, A Gla-And, A OFo-CMi, A Car-OFo, A EKH-OFR,
A RRU-SMi, A GHa-Bra, F Fld-GUL

Gandalf Paul Gardner

Ranger Gandalf Fellowship

Gondor Iain Bowen

A Los-MTi, A Dru spits at Umbar, A Lam S A Leb, A Leb S A Bel,
A Bel S A Leb, Faramir

Mordor Rod Walker

A Wil-RRu, A SMi S A Wil-RRu, A DGu S A And, A Bro S A And,
A And S A Bro, A EMy-EEm, 2A Ano-Eas, 2A NIIt-Osg, O Oro-MMo,
A Bar-Oro, 2A ELi-SRh, A off-NRh, Sauron MMo-Oro, 2A SIIt S...
2A NIIt-Osg, A Udu-Dag, Nazgul

Rohan Doug Brown

A Wol-Cel, A Eas-EEm, C DMa-Nin-Emy, A Hde-WEm, C Dun-Gwa-Min
A Ene-Dun

Saruman John Dods

A Ise holds, A Hol-Car, A KDu-Hol, Saruman

Umbar Mark Lilleleht

AF SOU C A Cit-Adt, AF BAY C A SGo-Anf, A Por S MORDOR SIIt,
A Cit-Adt, A SGo-Anf

Retreats Rohan A Eas disbands (no ret. ordered)

Elves A RRu-EMi

GAMENOTES

Now we have a new player, here are all the addresses again.

Doug Rowling, 228 Kinnell Avenue, Cardonald, Glasgow, G52 3RU,
Scotland

Cathy Ozog, PO Box 5225, Munds Park, AZ 88017, USA

Paul Gardner, 20 Spruce Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301, USA

Rod Walker, 1273 Crest Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024, USA

Mark Lilleleht, PO Box 3166, Charlottesville, VA 22903, USA

Doug Brown, PO Box 584, Penngrove, CA 94951, USA

John Dods, PO Box 2110, Ahurini, Napier, New Zealand

Iain Bowen, 2 Elderberry Close, Norton, Stourbridge, W. Midlands,
DY8 3JN, England

Rod asks if he gets his double armies back if something happens
to the Ringwearer. No.

Rod also requests a separation of seasons which is granted.
Therefore I will only need your autumn orders plus retreats for
next time.

I must apologise for taking so long to GM this game. An
assignment, a midterm and a final exam conspired against me.

DEADLINE: Saturday 8 May 1989

PRESS

Elven Kings Hall "Listen to me! Listen to me, all of you!"

The Elven maiden stood before the crowd, a ring on her finger. She was Caithiel - Queen of the Elves.

"Gondor has been betrayed. The Evil One stands on the very edge of Rohan's Lands and will attack. Umbar has joined with Mordor. Evil will rule the Land and Blackness will cover all that was once bright and beautiful!

We are the strongest force left to fight Mordor. We will ride to the aid of those who will fight to save the light.

((Sounds catchy. Fight For Your Right (To Save The Light). . . .))

"But what of the Dwarves?" one young elf asked - he was only 157. Caithiel answered him slowly.

"I cannot control the will of the Dwarves. We know that we will fade, but they do not believe this. They believe they will survive. We must trust them and hope Mordor's hand will not turn their hearts to evil.

"Now ride! To the aid of Rohan and for the revenge of Gondor!"

Saruman-GM All Hi, I feel like a new man. Saruman-GM Where am I?

Rath Castro, Minas Queasy, 14 Toklas (Elfmaiden in Gondoria Irredentia)

With "son" Farrago safely back from the battle of the Pansyfields, but sadly without his army, Bowenmir, Steward One of Gondor, surveyed the scene - naught was left save Farrago and his depraved companions, the City Guard.

The City was out of supplies of Crisco, food and men - naught was left for the West but to perish in fire. Bowenmir covered Prolapse Doubledeal with "Wild Nazgul" (not that the sage wasn't sozzled enough) and was about to set him alight when there was a knock on the door.

Farrago swished in - "We have ambassadors, Daddikins."

"Humph", grunted Bowenmir, "Ambassadors, can't you see the West is lost. We are doomed to die in flames like Ar-Pharizon the Golden."

"But, Daddy, you haven't seen them - one is some rough trade from the North, claims to be a stranger, but the other comes from Dougoine the Drunkard, Senchal of Glasgie and King of the Dwarves."

"Ah - show them in. This town can burn later."

Farrago simpered and flounced out. A couple of minutes later a tall figure with all the signs of being one of the Queens of Men entered. However, something was disturbing. There were no chaps, no leather, no pinkie ring nor earring. Bowenmir shuddered as the figure spoke in a stentorian voice.

"Hail and well met, Bowenmir, son of Sleazomir. I am Halberdshaft Dunagin, stranger of the North - I bring embassy from Arrogant, son of Airshirt, the Elffriend, Star of the North and heir to the throne."

Bowenmir gulped - the Stewed One had been appointed by the long-lost Kings of Men who had disappeared many years ago. This could be it. No more bathhouse concessions, no more taxes at the expense of everybody. He was going down in flames. Finally he intonated, "well, we are rather tired - could you await the morrow, dearie?" Halberdshaft grimaced at this suffixation, but left swiftly.

Taking a fifth of Laphroaig swiftly, Bowenmir struggled to light the flamethrower. If he was going down in flames, Minas Trashy was going with him. Just as it "poofed" into light, a voice spoke up (a deep voice only induced by 20 B+H a day).

"Ah, fackit, Bowenmir. We've got Saurod's cockring. Giz us a Teachers 'n American."

Bowenmir gasped, afore him was the stunted figure of Brisk Dwarffriend, Lord of Turneyroad and master of the Greatest Pits.

Mordor GHQ, Barad-Dur (3 Skullybones ("Rethe" to tinkerbeils and other unpacified barbarians)): "Well," boomed Sauron, who was in a particularly jovial mood. "Well, Bilgenest. We guess we showed 'em how over in Anorien, eh?"

The Great Baddy's black-robed, obsequious, smarmy Chief Toady nodded. "We looted and pillaged 'em right and proper, Your Redoubtable Rapacity. This is quite a feast you've laid out, as well. I guess everything's imported, right?"

"Straight from Anorien, of course. Had the kitchens working on it for days. How did you enjoy the Roast Haunch of Virgin Bordelaise?"

"Oh, it was wonderful, Your Gourmandish Gloriusness. And those shepherd oies"

"Peppered with actual shepherd, you may have noted."

"Oh, indeed, Your Supreme Sadisicality. By the way, oh Definitive Desecrateness, have I had the honor of introducing my new thingfriend to Your Wonderful Wickedness?"

"Thingfriend, Slimeon? You have a thingfriend? YOU???"

"We even have our Living in Sin License, oh Ardent Archfiendishness."

"We should hope so. Those licenses bring in quite a few filthy lucre to the treasury, you know."

"You'd really enjoy meeting her, Your Fervasive Fustulence. You might have seen her on the cover of Infernolitan or Esquish. She's the world sexiest giant spider."

"Ah! Ah! You don't mean ...?"

"Oh, yes sir. None other than Barbarella Sheloff."

"Um ... Bilge ... We are rather anxious to look into the matter of Our little Ring right now, you know"

"Oh ... oh ... OH ... OHHH! That reminds me, Your Inevitable Insatiability. [Are you ready? Here it comes.] We've got a live one!" [There. We said it and we're glad.]

wide.

"Baaaah!" screamed Bilgenest. "A Martian!"

Watching the Late Show again, un, Blige!!! Gaining better control, the Master of All Sadness (even unto neofascist Tehran ex-Senators) closed his regular eyes and kept only Big Red open. "All right, Slimeon, are you telling us that you've found somebody who has Our bitty Bijou?"

"Well ... not exactly, your Majestic Mischantropicity."

"Then, Blige, just for laughs, before we throw your highly disintegrated limbs and giblets to the out monsters, what ... exactly?"

"Oh, well, uh, we found someone who knows where it is, your Frequent Ferocity."

"Where is it, then?"

"Well, uh, not so much where it is, your Demiurgic Demonicity, as who has it."

Sauron was forgetting himself again. "Who?" he shouted, his other eyes popped open. "Who ... whooooo ... whoooooooooo!! It is said in the Red Book of Rightcoliquemarch that his resemblance to a giant 3-eyed black barn owl at that moment might have caused even Bilgenest to laugh had the latter not been distracted by the dawning realization that the truth might be dangerous to his health.

"Well, Your Ferennial Fredaciousness, un, actually, it's un, well ... uh ... that is ... you're hurting various parts of me, Your Ego centrifugal Enormity ... Well, you know Rowtoin the Flatulent, King of the Dwarves? He's got it."

Sauron's eyes got even larger, if that's possible. "Got it?" As in put his hands on it?"

"Actually, Your Dark and Deadliness, our best intelligence estimates are" At that moment, the entire mountain of Barad-dur gave a groan and lurched sideways. "...Are not so much that he's got his hand on it as" Another groan and lurch, this time to the other side. "...the reverse. You might say, your immense Incredulity, that a live one's got us!"

Before Sauron could react, the fortress of Barad-dur gave another groan, lurched in all directions at once, and collapsed. For several days, an eerie and unbroken silence hung over the ruins -- a silence whose meaning was underscored by a growing pile of daily newspapers, milk bottles (please don't ask what's really in them), and telegrams announcing that the Nazgul were deserting their posts and heading north with great haste.

NIGHT ON BARE HILL: Gonogoose the Wizard could see that his little band was totally surrounded by the dread Schnazghul. He quickly calculated his odds of getting away if he first threw one of the Barfin Brothers at them. Nil. Well, there was nothing for it but to defy them. He drew himself up to his full height (a little over 5 feet; not too impressive to the Schnazghul, who were all over 8). "Aroint thee, wretch!" he defiantly shouted at the nearest nasty.

The Schnazghul's rejoinder set Gonogoose reeling, it was so full of malevolence and evil power. "Aaaaa, yer faddah wears fairy boots!" Then, for good bad measure, the wraith added, "I got a million uv'em, hahhhhhh!"

"We're doomed," screamed Gonogoose. The wizard always found it easy to give in to panic. His motto was,

When in danger or in doubt,

Run and holler, scream, and shout.

when Dorothy's little dog Toto noticed what was going on and reached the not unreasonable conclusion that his mistress was in some sort of danger. This conclusion was confirmed by the fact that Dorothy was eyeing the Schnazzgul's noses with considerable interest, no doubt drawing certain conclusions -- not realizing, alas, that the dread apparitions were not bandits, but wraiths, and therefore essentially insubstantial when it came to the aspects which now occupied her expectations.

Barking furiously and frothing at the mouth, Toto launched himself at the Schnazzgul, biting anything he could lay teeth on.

Dropping his fell sword (did we mention these sinister, glowing goodies earlier?), the Schnazzgul leader, Robtzahxx, fled the scene, shrieking, "Mad dog! Mad dog!" The Wise have never been able to figure out the reason behind this, but the Foolish are of the opinion that the Mordor High Command has never developed a vaccine for hydroconobia. Within minutes all the horrible Schnazzgul had run away.

The only casualty was a wound sustained by Bobsey Barfin, who tried to pick up the aforementioned fell blade. It had fascinated him by its humming. The tune was, as it happened, "Old Folks at Home" -- although in its Hippit version, the lyrics were such that you would not wish to share them with small children, maiden aunts, or Jimmy Swaggart (no sense getting him any more suggestable than he already is). Bobsey kept sucking on his afflicted pinky for days afterward -- right up until the time the Schnazzgul came back.

But that, of course, is another episode -- unless you really want to read another couple of pages of this stuff now. No, I thought not.

Th-th-th-th--that's all, f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f ... y'all.

"Well" said Drwolin, the King of the Dwarves, adjusting his skirt of office "Ambassadors from Elves and Mordor. Always have trouble with elves, never quite know what gender they are, all of them shave their faces. You can only tell what sex a man is, from the way he plait's his beard".

"That Simpering BileKnees, the Mordorian Fellow, name has a funny ring to it, but seemes pretty straight to me, and there is something unusual about that sort of thing in Middle Earth these days, if you ask me. At least in Rohan, a horse is a horse, and a man is behind it. Same in Gondor, except you can scratch the horse, and not get arrested for doing so."

"What was that about a Ring he wanted me to give him anyway? If a Gentleman proposes to a Lady, it should be the man that gives the ring to the lady. Not t'other way about. In any case, what do I want morrings for, when I have this ONE".